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Curing Lumbago with a Comb

By EDWIN F. BOWERS, M.D.

LUMBAGO, as a rule, responds very quickly and kindly to zone therapy. The weapon that has given the best results in attacking lumbago and kindred affections is a common dull-pointed aluminum or other metal comb, such as may be procured at most animal shops for dog-combing purposes. These are clutched, one in each hand, the teeth pressed firmly on the palms of the hands and on the palmar surface of the thumb, first, second, and third fingers. The pressures thus "cut across" each of the five zones. In order to get the best results the pressures should be continued for from ten to twenty minutes. Occasionally it may be necessary to work also on the "web" between the thumb and the first finger, and between the first and second fingers.

Some practitioners of therapy prefer to begin operations on the tips of the thumb, first, second, and third fingers—gradually working up the palms of the hands, and spending five minutes on the wrists.

Remember always that the palmar surfaces of the hands and fingers are to be attacked for pains anywhere on the back; and the top or (back) surfaces of the hands and fingers should be treated for any trouble on the front of the body, arms, or legs. In zone therapy, front is back, and back is front, so far as the hands and feet are concerned.

A Bad Case Helped

RELIEF usually follows the first treatment. I recall a recent case that had persisted for more than three months. This man had taken practically every form of treatment recommended without any except transient benefit.

He was bent almost double, and for many weeks had not been able to stand erect. He was presented with two aluminum combs and told to squeeze them for ten or fifteen minutes while waiting in the ante-room. After being brought into the office, his hands were thoroughly "combed."

He straightened out completely, received a treatment the following day, and found it unnecessary to take any more.

Sometimes equally good results follow from fastening hollowed-out spring-clothespins on the tips of the fingers corresponding to the zones in which the lumbago is felt—or even from binding

heavy rubber bands around these fingers—leaving them in position five or ten minutes at a time, unless the finger becomes badly discolored, in which case the pressure must be temporarily removed.

One zone therapy practitioner, while on a journey, noticed that the conductor of the train walked "all doubled up." It developed that the railroad man had a "misery in his back." Three weeks in a sanatorium had given little relief.

The doctor invited him to go into the smoking compartment for a few minutes, where he put rubber bands on the thumb and forefinger of each of the trainman's hands, at the same time making firm pressure with his thumb nails on the ligatured fingers. The conductor was not informed of the purpose of this procedure, so his imagination had nothing to work on.

After about ten minutes of this treatment, a whistle blew, and the conductor had suddenly to leave his chair. He straightened up and went out "on the run."

When he came back, he laughed and said: "This is the first time in six weeks I've stood up or moved without pain. What in thunder have those little rubber bands to do with lumbago, anyway?"

Naturally, in sciatica and in articular or joint rheumatism the results have not been so uniformly favorable. For sciatica may be due to hip-joint dislocation. Indeed, one of our most famous bone surgeons claims that all cases of sciatica result from a twist or subluxation of the hip joint—which certainly is not true of those cases cured with a comb, or by electricity, or by some medical measure.

Treating Sciatica

IN treating sciatica, particular attention must be given the "hip area" of the hand on the same side as the sciatica. This means that the palmar surface of the little finger and the palm of the hand on that side, as well as the "edge" of the palm, running up over the top of the hand, must be thoroughly "combed."

But the best and most rapid relief for sciatica is usually secured by "attacking" the soles of the feet—using the comb in the same manner and for the same areas as described for the hands; in other words, by manipulating the zones in the feet corresponding to the zones in the hands.



Shall I Buy a Foreign Bond?

By ALBERT W. ATWOOD

MANY readers have wanted to know about foreign government bonds since the war began, but the writer has hesitated to discuss these investments because of the possible element of hazard connected with them. Conditions have been changing in recent months, and it now seems fairly certain that American investors can pick up "bargains" among foreign government bonds without much chance of loss.

Expert opinion has been veering in favor of these loans because of the improvement in the position of the Allies; for, while there are German and Austrian bonds for sale in this country, by far the greater interest is in the various obligations of the more numerous Allies. The writer is no military expert, but he feels reasonably safe in assuming that the Allies will not be badly enough defeated to have their countries overrun by the Germans. Such an outcome of the war is about the only one that would lead to the external bonds of the Allies being repudiated.

But a much more practical reason for favoring these foreign government bonds—or, at least, a few of them—is the fact that England and France have been compelled to borrow in this country in the last few months through the means of collateral security. This is a new departure for such rich and powerful countries; but then, war is a great leveler. In addition to the credit of these rich countries, the bonds are backed by ample security in American bonds and stocks and securities of neutral countries, which are left on deposit in this country to the extent of 12 per cent. of the face value of the loan. Thus, even if the Prussian Guard should seize both Paris and London and make England and France mere colonies of Germany, there is no reason why the bonds should not be paid off.

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